

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 1025

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, LE, SY

SUBJ: GUARANTEE FOR SETTLEMENT OF LEBANESE CRISIS

1. PRESIDENT FRANGIE'S CONFIDENTIAL ADVISOR LUCIEN DAHDAH INFORMS US IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE THAT THE QUESTION OF THE GUARANTEE FOR THE LEBANESE SETTLEMENT WILL BE DISCUSSED BETWEEN SYRIAN PRES ASAD AND PRES FRANGIE IN DAMASCUS NEXT TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY. AS A MEANS OF GIVING ASSURANCES TO THE CHRISTIANS, FRANGIE WILL ALLEGEDLY SUGGEST THAT SYRIA INVITE EITHER THE US OR FRANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SYRIAN GUARANTEE OPERATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF OVER SEEING LEBANON'S ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION. THE SECOND COUNTRY INVOLVED WOULD NEITHER BE THE GUARANTOR OF MAINTAINING SECURITY IN LEBANON NOR HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROVIDING RECONSTRUCTION FUNDS, DAHDAH SAID. IT WOULD BE SORT OF A "WITNESS" TO THE FORMER AND A "MANAGER" OF THE LATTER.

2. EMBOFF VOLUNTEERED OPINION THAT THIS PROPOSAL SEEMED TO BE A NON-STARTER AND ASKED WHETHER FRANGIE-ASAD MEETING WOULD THEN RESULT IN A DEAD-LOCK. DAHDAH REPLIED IN THE NEGATIVE, SAYING THAT IF ASAD DOES NOT ACCEPT THE SUGGESTION, FRANGIE WILL GO ALONG WITH A SYRIAN GUARANTEE ALONE, FRANGIE'S ATTITUDE BEING THAT HE NEEDS NO OUTSIDE POWER TO GUARANTEE HIS COUNTRY'S SECURITY. AT THE SAME
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TIME HE WILL INFORM ASAD THAT HE WILL EXERCISE HIS

CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO BRING ANY VIOLATIONS OF THE AGREEMENT TO THE PUBLIC'S ATTENTION OR, IF NECESSARY, TO THE UN.

3. DAHDAH ALSO REMARKED THAT RECENT US PUBLIC STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR SYRIA'S CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN THE LEBANESE SETTLEMENT HAD TENDED TO ALLAY CHRISTIAN FEARS ABOUT SYRIA.

4. IN EMBOFF'S OPINION, IT IS QUITE LIKELY THAT ATTEMPT TO INVOLVE WESTERN POWER IN AGREEMENT, EVEN IN AN INDIRECT WAY, REFLECTS DAHDAH'S PERSONAL THINKING RATHER THAN FRANGIE'S IN ANY EVENT, AS NOTED ABOVE, IF PROPOSAL IS NOT ACCEPTED, AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE DEADLOCKED.

LAMBRAKIS

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